



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

this school are ahead of others—they perhaps are not—but because they express in the most characteristic manner the general aspirations of the new-comers. Instead of bringing out this special spirit, M. Pellissier devotes the greatest part of his chapter on poetry to the *form* of the new verses and poems, which, as can easily be seen, was a secondary result of the whole movement. He is not unjust to the symbolists, but he praises them timidly, and seems to understand their efforts with regret. In other chapters he does not so much as mention symbolist writers, he ignores them entirely. To give only a few examples. In the chapter on the drama, what mention is there of Villiers de l'Isle Adam, the author of *Axel*, and most of all of Maeterlinck? Nothing is said of Saint Pol Roux nor of Paul Claudel. In the chapter on the novel, Villiers de l'Isle Adam (*Nouvelle Eve*); de Régnier, de Gourmont, Louys are ignored. M. Pellissier belongs himself to the generation of the realists and has accustomed himself to see only realists about him. His book is very characteristic from the point of view of its omissions. How was it possible not to speak of Mirbeau, the author of *Le jardin des supplices*, so much more original than Rod, Prévost, Pouvillon, Theuriet, and even Rosny?

It is the same ignorance of the aspiration of the young generation which leads M. Pellissier to pay so little attention to foreign literature in France. A page here and there is all he devotes to it. And yet its influence has been and still is great, owing to the fact that it possesses this note of peculiar mysticism favored by French authors as well.

Finally, another manifestation in literature, which again lies in the same line, and of which M. Pellissier does not say a word, is the alliance in the past years of several authors of mark with the Church. Not only have we the noisy Catholicism of Brunetière, but also a strong current towards upholding moral standards on religious principles, Bourget being the most illustrious example. (Huysmans has been mentioned by M. Pellissier.) This movement is far from new. As early as 1890 Jean Honcey called attention to it in a famous article in the *Revue Bleue* (Jan. 3, 1890): "Les chrétiens de lettres—le réveil religieux en France."

These few remarks will be enough to show

that there is more unity than is generally admitted in contemporary French literature, that the book of M. Pellissier ought to have expressed this unity and would thus have escaped the danger of being, in so many parts, nothing but a mere catalogue of appreciations on the work of different authors.

ALBERT SCHINZ.

Bryn Mawr College.

GERMAN LITERATURE.

Lessings Hamburgische Dramaturgie.

Abridged and edited with introduction and notes by CHARLES HARRIS. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1901. xl+356 pp.

Moods and tastes and fashions change. Is it true that we fancy the same kind of a school edition we did twenty-five or fifty years ago? Can a given text be edited in but one way and in no other? Is it hazardous to deviate from the time-hallowed and petrified method? These are some of the questions we ask ourselves after a perusal of the above edition. The *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* has never been edited in this country before. How gratifying it would have been to find the new dressed up in new clothes! Why increase the number of text-books upon the shelves of teachers and professors, in general a mere aggregation of staleness and dullness, most of them born of the desire to edit some book or other, few of them begotten of genuine enthusiasm and profound interest?

From the point of view of greater independence on the part of the student in the pursuit of his work, little can be said in favor of most introductions to the classics. Instead of teaching the student reliance upon himself, instead of leaving him to grapple with the subject alone, and instead of giving him an opportunity to run it down in hours of vigorous absorbed attention, it offers him certain ready-made results prepared by the teacher, permitting him to take the information by an almost effortless contact with it. The same thing may be said of Prof. Harris' Introduction.

A further abridgment of the text would have been profitable. As long as translation monopolized the bulk of the student's time in and out of the class-room, and facility in translation was regarded as a sufficient index of intellectual power, it may have been feasible to

cover a large amount of material in the recitation period. But now that that highly specialized and one-sided method is losing ground, only a portion of the hour is devoted to it and more time is left for a thorough discussion of the text. This method of procedure would also leave the student with more time for individual study upon assigned portions of the book not found in the edition he is using and would serve to emancipate him from an altogether too servile acquiescence in the editor's and instructor's standpoint.

Prof. Harris observes the strictest silence with regard to the end to be obtained by the study of the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*. In the Preface to his edition, he conscientiously records that the Lachmann-Muncker edition is the basis of the text, that a few typographical errors have been corrected, that the Prussian rules have been followed in the orthography, that passages have been omitted and explained, but says not a word concerning the motive for editing the work. Nor does the Introduction contain a clear enunciation of the design of the work. In fact some of the statements made here offer us plausible arguments for not reading it at all. It may be contended that I have torn Prof. Harris' sentences from their connection and have twisted them to suit my own purpose. Granted that this has been done. My aim is simply to show that objections can be raised and are being raised to admitting the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* to the class-room at all, and, therefore, Prof. Harris should at least have made a definite reference to that fact.

1. The *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* lacks unity of purpose. On p. xviii Prof. Harris says: "It is, in a way, a haphazard production." 2. There is much in it that is worthless. On p. xviii we read:

"If we were compelled to judge the *Dramaturgie* by the number of pages which are well nigh worthless to-day, we should consider it of little value."

Any one who will take the pains to read the little book of Friedrich Seiler, *Der Gegenwartswert der Hamburgischen Dramaturgie*, Berlin, Weidmann, 1901, will easily be convinced that it has less actual intrinsic worth than Prof. Harris is here willing to admit. 3. Out of fifty-two plays criticized only eighteen were German and "of these eighteen it is fair to say that only Lessing's *Miss Sara Sampson*

is of interest to the cultivated reader of to-day." How profitable to read the criticism of worthless plays! We may not assume that the student has read any of the French plays examined by the reviewer Lessing. The student is entirely dependent upon Lessing's prejudice against the French and, perhaps, the prejudice of his instructor also. There is surely no justice in such a one-sided procedure. 4. "As it stands, the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* is not to be taken blindly as the deliberate statement of his own views," p. xxvi. What are his serious convictions? Will the editor leave the student in a state of confusion? 5. One of the most important topics discussed has no present value. P. xxxiii:

"For both the English and the German reader this keen discussion of the unities has no present importance; for the former, because the example of the great dramatists of the Elizabethan age made such a discussion unnecessary; for the other, because Lessing's victory was complete in his own country."

P. xxxv:

"The lapse of time and the shifting of the point of view makes much that was most valuable in the *Dramaturgie* for its day of less worth to us."

P. xxxvi: "Indeed his own mature dramas are in part flat contradictions of the theories of the Greek philosopher," Aristotle.

These statements of a derogatory character are hardly balanced by others of a more encouraging nature. P. xviii we read: "we might question whether any other critical work has ever surpassed it." P. xix: "As regards vocabulary, inflection and syntactical construction Lessing's language is a rich and comparatively unworked mine." P. xxxi:

"Lessing's interpretation (of Aristotle) holds in the main: in a few points the consensus of opinion is against him, in others it is fair to assume that no agreement will ever be reached."

P. xxxvi: "The *Dramaturgie* does in passing touch upon a considerable body of theory in a way that gives to it enduring value." P. xxxix: "a noteworthy pamphlet of a literary campaign." P. xl: "The superadded something of which this Introduction can give no account is the touch of genius which makes imperishable."

Janus-like we find ourselves looking in two directions at the same time, standing between two fires. What shall we do with the book? Let us assume for a moment

that there are no serious objections to be raised to the study of the book, that only the most favorable comment can be made upon it. Even then we should be at sea; for the passages last cited suggest many different methods of study. Shall we study Lessing's critical method? Shall we devote ourselves solely to philological considerations? Shall we make the æsthetic theories of the unities and of fear and pity, etc., the subject of our investigations? Or shall we treat it from the point of view of history? If the Introduction is to be made a *pons asinorum* for the instructor as well as for the student in any case, why fail to make even a suggestion as to didactic possibilities?

Strikingly strange is the fact that the editor nowhere designates the class of students by whom the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* might profitably be read. The only hint as to the previous preparation of students is given in a paragraph prefatory to the notes, in which Prof. Harris says, that an acquaintance with the life of Lessing and the most general facts of German literature are assumed. Such a regulation would debar many students otherwise eligible; for few students possess, or can be expected to possess, the biographical and historical knowledge which the editor regards as essential. In the case of such students it would have been fair to suggest where the suitable material may be found.

Some passages of the original have been omitted. The reason given for the omission is very unsatisfactory. Everything is excluded that seemed to the editor of little or no present value and interest. To relieve himself of all responsibility in the matter of selection, it would have been wiser to say, that the retention or rejection of a chapter was largely influenced by the example of German editors. If, however, the work of choosing was done independently of his predecessors, an illustration of his method of choice would have been welcome.

As introductions go, the Introduction covering thirty pages is well done. Looking toward perspicuity, much would have been gained by a separation of the different portions of it into chapters with appropriate titles. Pp. ix to xxii touch upon the genesis of the *Hamburgische*

Dramaturgie. The aim of the remaining pages is to give an insight into its purpose. Lessing's original plan was to criticize the plays represented, and also to pass judgment upon the merit or demerit of the actor's interpretation. But the perversity of the players compelled Lessing to dispense with the histrionic phase of his reviews. The mediocrity of some of the dramas often served merely as a starting-point for the discussion of serious dramatic principles. The paragraph which refers to the *Dramaturgie* as a prose master-piece (p. xviii) is an episode in the consistent development of the essay and ought, therefore, to have been introduced elsewhere. In his treatment of the *Dramaturgie* as a polemic against French tragedy, against Gottsched as the representative of French taste in Germany, against Corneille and Voltaire, the editor's attitude toward Gottsched, whose service to German literature has been underestimated since Lessing's time and is just beginning to be appreciated, is the attitude of prejudiced tradition. His collocation of the passages referring to Shakespeare is valuable; it would have been more pedagogical to permit the student to make the collocation for himself. The question of the inquiring student, "what theories are held to-day with reference to tragedy" is left entirely unanswered. There is hardly a hint anywhere that there are *modern* problems of the tragedy. The omission of any mention of the name Bernays in connection with the question of *purification*, of such books as Theodor Lipps, *Der Streit über die Tragödie*, Hamburg and Leipzig, 1891, or Johannes Volkelt, *Ästhetik des Tragischen*, München, 1897, books very helpful and indispensable to the maturer student in case of a desired orientation, marks a sad and inexplicable neglect. The editor had a splendid opportunity to explain the doctrine of *art for art's sake*, but failed to grasp it, and so the obscurity of the phrase will continue to be a source of perplexity to the student.

But few typographical errors are to be found. The notes are trustworthy in almost every instance, and in only a few cases have translations been offered where the dictionary would have served just as well.

J. A. C. HILDNER.

University of Michigan.